

high praises for his wife and high school sweetheart, Tabbatha; whose outstanding cooking he would attribute both woefully and wistfully the weight gain he experienced a month before deployment. He loved her tremendously, and whenever we weren't "talking shop" her name was his constant refrain.

He would also speak reverently of his brother. We would listen to his stories about growing up in small town Illinois and laugh with him about all the trouble he and his brother would get into.

When he came to my platoon, he welcomed young soldiers who were far from their families to his home frequently, be it for Thanksgiving dinner or for a few beers or a football game. He made our platoon his family, and we will always cherish that bond.

I don't know what I planned to accomplish by writing this. All I know is that this man was like a brother to me, and I feel like I have to memorialize him somehow. He taught me a lot of things that I need to know about being a good platoon leader, and even now his legacy lives on in the soldiers he once led and the outstanding ways in which they conduct themselves.

I hope that I have given you a somewhat accurate picture of the man we loved, but I have a sneaking suspicion that there are no words eloquent enough to describe him. Nevertheless, I thank you in advance for taking the time to read this. Keep fighting the good fight, and we here will do the same.

Respectfully, ILT Benjamin Kim.

SGT Andrew Lancaster of Stockton, IL, enlisted in the Army with a friend in 2002 to protect America after September 11. Before Iraq, he served as a paratrooper in Afghanistan with the Army's 173rd Airborne Brigade.

In Stockton, IL, a small town with a population of about 1,800, Sergeant Lancaster was known as Andy, the kid everybody loved, and his death really hit the folks in that community hard.

At Freeport High School, where he graduated in 2002, where he stood out in football, basketball, and choir, his teachers and coaches recall Andy Lancaster as an outgoing and responsible young man who had a way of making everyone around him happy.

When the news of his death reached that town, the high school football team posted a tribute to Sergeant Lancaster's family on its message board. Messages of support were also posted at the local ice cream shop where Sergeant Lancaster's young widow Tabby once worked.

In addition to a town and a wife who loved him, Sergeant Lancaster leaves behind his mom and his stepfather, Donna and Steve Vanderheyden; his father Harlan Lancaster; a brother, two step-sisters, and his grandparents.

He and Tabby married just before Sergeant Lancaster left for Afghanistan, and they planned to start a family when he came home. Instead, last month, Tabby Lancaster attended a ceremony at Fort Stewart at which 10 trees were planted in honor of her husband and nine other members of the 3rd Infantry Division who died recently in Iraq. Since 2003, a total of 369 trees have been planted along the base's memorial walk.

Mr. President, I regret I never had a chance to meet Andy Lancaster, but I

have met so many soldiers just like him. They are natural leaders who probably succeed at whatever they choose to do in life. They certainly could have made a lot more money and lived far more comfortably, but they chose to enlist to defend our country.

Those are the kind of people we are losing every day in these wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Like Andy Lancaster, each of them leaves a hole in the hearts of those who loved them and in the heart of our Nation. We honor their sacrifice and grieve their loss.

In a few minutes, Mr. President, we will start debating the Defense appropriations bill. It is a critically important bill. As a member of the Appropriations Committee, I know a lot of the discussion about this bill will be about numbers. This little statement that I have made on the floor, reading into the record the letter of Lieutenant Kim about his fallen sergeant, really takes this discussion and debate way beyond numbers. It reminds us of 3,800 brave soldiers, such as Andy Lancaster, who have given their lives for America, soldiers whose lives continue to be lost every single day that we continue this war.

I stand today in tribute not just to Sergeant Lancaster but to all the men and women who continue to serve us with such honor and dignity. I hope all of us who value and cherish the contributions they make will remember them in our hearts and our prayers and our votes.

Mr. President, I yield back morning business time.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Morning business is closed.

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2008

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of H.R. 3222, which the clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A bill (H.R. 3222) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

The Senate proceeded to consider the bill, which had been reported from the Committee on Appropriations, with an amendment to strike all after the enacting clause and insert in lieu thereof the following:

That the following sums are appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, for military functions administered by the Department of Defense and for other purposes, namely:

TITLE I

MILITARY PERSONNEL

MILITARY PERSONNEL, ARMY

For pay, allowances, individual clothing, subsistence, interest on deposits, gratuities, perma-

nent change of station travel (including all expenses thereof for organizational movements), and expenses of temporary duty travel between permanent duty stations, for members of the Army on active duty, (except members of reserve components provided for elsewhere), cadets, and aviation cadets; for members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps; and for payments pursuant to section 156 of Public Law 97-377, as amended (42 U.S.C. 402 note), and to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, \$31,734,076,000.

MILITARY PERSONNEL, NAVY

For pay, allowances, individual clothing, subsistence, interest on deposits, gratuities, permanent change of station travel (including all expenses thereof for organizational movements), and expenses of temporary duty travel between permanent duty stations, for members of the Navy on active duty (except members of the Reserve provided for elsewhere), midshipmen, and aviation cadets; for members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps; and for payments pursuant to section 156 of Public Law 97-377, as amended (42 U.S.C. 402 note), and to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, \$23,338,772,000.

MILITARY PERSONNEL, MARINE CORPS

For pay, allowances, individual clothing, subsistence, interest on deposits, gratuities, permanent change of station travel (including all expenses thereof for organizational movements), and expenses of temporary duty travel between permanent duty stations, for members of the Marine Corps on active duty (except members of the Reserve provided for elsewhere); and for payments pursuant to section 156 of Public Law 97-377, as amended (42 U.S.C. 402 note), and to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, \$10,291,831,000.

MILITARY PERSONNEL, AIR FORCE

For pay, allowances, individual clothing, subsistence, interest on deposits, gratuities, permanent change of station travel (including all expenses thereof for organizational movements), and expenses of temporary duty travel between permanent duty stations, for members of the Air Force on active duty (except members of reserve components provided for elsewhere), cadets, and aviation cadets; for members of the Reserve Officers' Training Corps; and for payments pursuant to section 156 of Public Law 97-377, as amended (42 U.S.C. 402 note), and to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, \$24,155,054,000.

RESERVE PERSONNEL, ARMY

For pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, gratuities, travel, and related expenses for personnel of the Army Reserve on active duty under sections 10211, 10302, and 3038 of title 10, United States Code, or while serving on active duty under section 12301(d) of title 10, United States Code, in connection with performing duty specified in section 12310(a) of title 10, United States Code, or while undergoing reserve training, or while performing drills or equivalent duty or other duty, and expenses authorized by section 16131 of title 10, United States Code; and for payments to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, \$3,672,440,000.

RESERVE PERSONNEL, NAVY

For pay, allowances, clothing, subsistence, gratuities, travel, and related expenses for personnel of the Navy Reserve on active duty under section 10211 of title 10, United States Code, or while serving on active duty under section 12301(d) of title 10, United States Code, in connection with performing duty specified in section 12310(a) of title 10, United States Code, or while undergoing reserve training, or while performing drills or equivalent duty, and expenses authorized by section 16131 of title 10, United States Code; and for payments to the Department of Defense Military Retirement Fund, \$1,801,985,000.